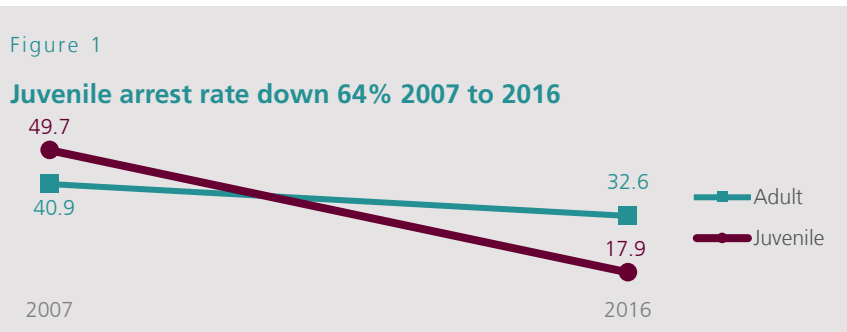


2007 to 2017 – Juvenile Justice System Changes and Substance Abuse Monitoring Data

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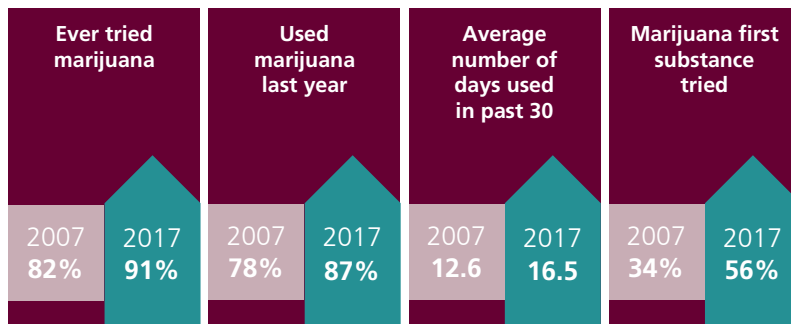
While the juvenile justice system’s focus has always been on rehabilitation, the last decade or so has seen significant changes in the field, with an even greater focus on deterrence, alternatives to detention, and implementation of evidence-based practices. During this time, the juvenile arrest rate in San Diego County has declined at an even greater rate than the adult arrest rate (from 2007 to 2016, the most recent year available), and a rate that used to be higher for juveniles, is now higher for adults¹ (Figure 1).



As part of the Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM) program, youth who are arrested and booked into Juvenile Hall are interviewed within 48 hours and asked an anonymous and confidential interview about their substance use history and other risky behaviors. With the release of data from the 2017 interviews², this CJ Flash compares how data collected in the most recent year varied from answers provided to the same questions in 2007. In interpreting these differences, it is important to note they could be due to real changes in the behavior of youth who are booked into juvenile hall then and now, changes in the sample of youth who are booked and interviewed, or some combination of the two.

Highlight 1

Youth use of marijuana has increased, and a greater percentage report it is the first substance they have ever tried, before alcohol and tobacco.



How has the sample of youth changed since 2007?

Fewer youth were available to be interviewed in 2016 (106, compared to 173 in 2007). In addition, a greater percentage were booked for a misdemeanor offense (60% versus 48% in 2007) and fewer were booked for a property offense (11% versus 22%) or a status offense (0% versus 13%).

¹ San Diego Association of Governments (2018). *Arrests 2016: Law Enforcement Response to Crime in the San Diego Region*. San Diego, CA: Author.

² For more information on 2017 juvenile arrestee drug use in the San Diego region, please see CJ Bulletin: sandag.org/uploads/publicationid/publicationid_4506_24184.pdf

Highlight 2

Youth were more likely to report that marijuana is **"NOT BAD FOR USERS AT ALL"** and that it is **"VERY EASY"** to obtain in 2017, than 2007 (Figures 2 and 3). They were also more likely to think it was less harmful and more easily available than alcohol and tobacco.

Figure 2

Percent who feel substance is **"NOT BAD AT ALL"**

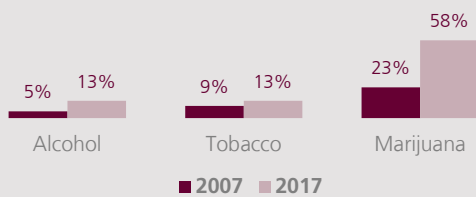
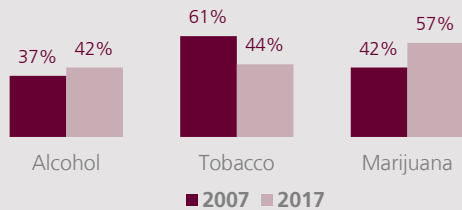


Figure 3

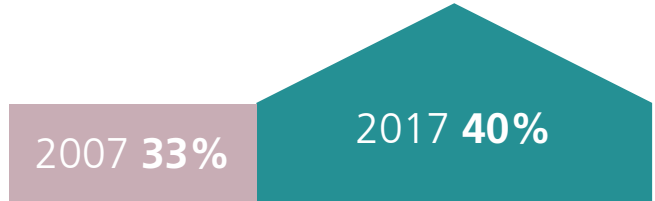
Percent who feel substance is **"VERY EASY"** to obtain



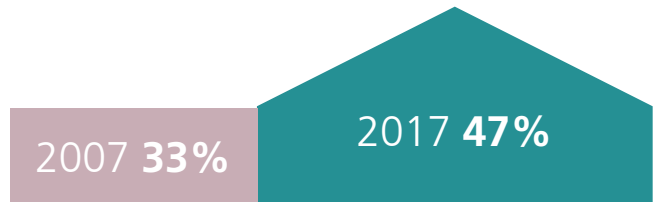
Highlight 3

More youth in 2017 report trying meth and using prescription drugs illegally, compared to 2007.

ever tried meth



ever tried prescription drugs illegally



Highlight 4

More youth in 2017 reported every seriously thinking about suicide and also having a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Ever
seriously
thought
about
suicide

2007: **About 1 in 8**
2017: **About 1 in 5**

ADHD
diagnosis

2007: **About 1 in 5**
2017: **About 1 in 3**